

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2016

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE in
English as a Second Language (4ES0)
Paper 01: Reading and Writing

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GCSE in English as a Second Language
Paper 1: Reading and Writing
Examiner Report

Paper Background

The Reading and Writing Paper is divided into six parts as follows:

Part	Topic	Question types and marks
Part 1 Reading	Leaflet: '10 Ways to Improve Your Memory'	multiple matching (10)
Part 2 Reading	Article: 'A Different Way of Living'	short answer questions (10) multiple choice (5) 5/10 correct statements (5)
Part 3 Reading	Article: 'ICEHOTEL'	true/false/not given (5) sentence completion (10) summary completion (5)
Part 4 Writing	An email to a friend about moving to a new home	informal email (10) 75 – 100 word response
Part 5 Writing	A report for the school magazine giving the benefits of music lessons and cookery lessons and stating a preference	semi-formal report (20) 100 – 150 word response
Part 6 Writing	Writing a summary of a text: 'Travelling with a Tour Group'	formal summary (20) 100 – 150 word response

Performance on the Reading Paper

Part 1: Matching Headings to Paragraphs

In general, candidates found this part of the paper accessible and most understood how to address the task. However, some candidates crossed more than one box in response to a question but did not indicate which of these responses they wished Examiners to consider.

Centres are advised that where more than one response is selected where only one is required, no mark can be awarded even if the correct response has been indicated.

Part 2: Short Answer Questions

The short answer questions in this part of the paper proved challenging for candidates. The instructions ask candidates to use no more than three words in their response, to source their responses from one point in the text and not to answer in complete sentences.

Some candidates provided responses longer than three words long and a minority responded in full sentences.

Centres should remind their candidates that any response which exceeds the word limit (in this case three words) will not be rewarded, even if the correct answer is included in the response given. It is essential that candidates observe the word limit given.

Some candidates repeated elements of the question before adding their response. Candidates should not rework any part of the question in their response as this will take them over the allowed word limit.

General advice

- The candidate response to the short answer questions should come only from one point in the source text. Candidates are not expected to formulate a response by putting together words found in different parts of the source text.
- As candidates take their responses directly from the source text, spelling should be accurate.

Examples

- Question 11

The correct answer is 'traditional neighbourhood(s)'.

A popular response here was 'neighbourhoods'. Although this is within the word limit, it is incorrect in terms of the meaning of the text.

- Question 12

The correct answer is 'building cost(s)'.

A popular response was 'buildings cost(s)'. However, the meaning here changes to the cost of the buildings as opposed to the costs involved in the process of building the properties.

A response such as 'cost of building' was not accepted as this phrase does not appear in the text. Candidates should not 'create' responses - they must select their responses word for word from one point in the source text.

- Question 13

The correct answer is '(community) interaction(s)'.

A frequent response here was 'neighbours interaction' but this does not appear in the source text and so cannot be correct.

'Contact with their neighbours' was also a popular response but it exceeded the word limit. Reformulation of this to 'contact with neighbours' to comply with the word limit, was not an allowable response since candidates should not reformulate the text.

- Question 18

The correct answer is 'clothes and toys'.

Some candidates attempted to combine the words 'childcare', 'clothes' and 'toys' to give a response in three words. The source text states 'families swap childcare, pass on clothes and toys to others...'

Candidates must not reformulate the text but lift their response word for word from the source text.

Where candidates did respond with the reformulation of 'childcare, toys, clothes', this could not be rewarded despite containing the correct words.

Multiple Choice Questions

In general, candidates successfully followed the instructions for these questions, indicating one response only to each question.

Parts 5/ 10: Correct Statements

In general, candidates successfully followed the instructions for this question, indicating which five statements they considered to be true.

Part 3: True/ False/ Not Given Questions

In general, candidates successfully followed the instructions for these questions, indicating True/False or Not Given for each of the questions.

Gap Fill Questions

The gap fill questions in this part of the paper proved challenging for candidates. The instructions ask candidates to use no more than two words in their response and to source their responses from one point in the text.

Some candidates provided responses longer than two words long. Centres should remind their candidates that any response which exceeds the word limit (in this case two words) will not be rewarded, even if the correct answer is included in the response given. It is essential that candidates observe the word limit given.

General advice

- The candidate response to the gap fill questions should come only from one point in the source text. Candidates are not expected to formulate a response by putting together words found in different parts of the source text.

- As candidates take their responses directly from the source text, spelling should be accurate.
- As candidates are required to complete sentences in this part of the paper, consideration should also be given to the 'grammatical fit' of the selected answer.

Example

- Question 40

The correct answer is '(bedroom) suites'.

Some candidates put forward 'bedrooms' as a response. This could not be accepted as the source text clearly states, 'no two bedroom suites are the same...'. The word bedrooms does not appear in the text. 'Rooms' could also not be rewarded as it was too general.

Summary Completion

In general, candidates successfully followed the instructions for these questions, indicating one response only to each question. As candidates are taking their responses from a list of given words, spelling should be accurate.

Advice to centres

- Prepare candidates for the reading tasks by familiarising them with the style of the paper and with the types of questions they can expect to find.
- Advise students to follow the instructions in the rubric when answering questions and to adhere to the word/number limit.
- Advise candidates that they should only use words/numbers taken directly from the text.
- Advise candidates that in sentence completion and short answer questions task types, the words they need run together in the text. Candidates do not need to do any reformulation of the text.
- Candidates should consider the grammatical fit of their answers in the gap fill questions.
- Candidates should make sure they copy words from the text correctly when providing their answers.

Performance on the Writing Paper

A general reminder for this part of the paper is for candidates to write as legibly as possible. In some cases Examiners found it difficult to decipher what candidates had written. As always, Examiners do their utmost to work out meaning.

Part 4

Candidates found Part 4, an informal email to a friend, an accessible writing task and the majority found success here.

The style and register necessary for a written communication with a friend was confidently applied, with a good range of vocabulary and grammatical structures deployed. The majority of candidates made effective use of paragraphing and cohesive devices.

Candidates who were least successful in this part of the paper were those who did not adhere to the word count by giving much fuller and detailed responses than necessary and those who wasted words with lengthy introductions at the beginning of the email.

Phrases such as 'The exams tornado has now passed' and 'What's up? The sky, I know' are wasteful and often contain language which does not suit the rest of the response.

This year there was a preference for the word 'lagniappe' which was considered inappropriate for the task. The use of irrelevant language impacts on the marks available for lexical accuracy and range. Centres are reminded that where information about one or more of the bullet points is given after the 100 word limit, this content will not be credited.

Candidates are permitted to use any accepted vocabulary items suitable for the informal register of the task. If, during the marking process, candidates use lexis that is unfamiliar to examiners, these words are routinely checked for meaning and their suitability for the task assessed.

When marking this task, the focus is on the main body of the response. It is not necessary for candidates to recreate an email layout with the use of 'to', 'from' and 'subject' etc.

This task simply starts informally with, for example, 'Hi Mary...' and closes equally informally with, for example, 'Hope to see you soon, Susan' or another similar informal expression.

The word count commences with the greeting at the beginning, e.g., 'Hi Mary' and concludes with the closing phrase, e.g., 'See you soon, Susan'. The word count does not include anything written before the opening phrase, e.g., 'to', 'from' and 'subject'.

Part 5

Candidates found Part 5 to be an accessible writing task possibly due to the topic.

In general, candidates were able to demonstrate positively their understanding of the style and register needed to write a semi-formal report for the school magazine, and responded well to this task.

A wide range of vocabulary was used and candidates attempted to use a variety of grammar structures. There were some instances where candidates had included information about one or more of the bullet points after the 150 word limit, and centres are advised to remind their candidates that no material over the word limit will be considered for assessment.

Some candidates choose to make use of headings and sub-headings, while others do not and opt for the use of paragraphing instead. Either approach is acceptable. When writing a report, it is advisable for candidates to write a short introduction stating the purpose of the report. The conclusion to the report is usually shaped around the final bullet point of the task.

Some candidates set their report out using headings and sub-headings in combination with bullet points. Although this approach is accepted as a report format, candidates should consider how this absence of full sentences affects cohesion.

Part 6

As in previous series, the summarising task was the most challenging for candidates. However, a greater number of candidates successfully extracted the required information from the text and were able to present this information using their own words. The use of a source text which includes sub-headings seems to have made it more possible for candidates to achieve this. This year, there were fewer candidates who were overly reliant on the source text and thus more candidates completed a summary in their own words.

In those cases where candidates were able to extract the necessary information from the text, some were unable to put this into their own words. A number of candidates were overly reliant on the source text. Where candidates did make some attempt to use their own words; having to pick out relevant points from the text combined with the need to formulate a summary; this meant that responses sometimes lacked cohesion and there were issues with grammatical and lexical accuracy.

Where candidates had copied directly and entirely from the source text, or done so and also used only isolated words or phrases of their own, these responses were not awarded any marks for lexis or grammar, but were credited for Communicative Quality and Effective Organisation.

On a general note, candidates should only provide information as requested by the task bullets and candidates should not include any additional material which is not found in the source text.

A short introduction and a short conclusion to this task makes for a more cohesive response and one that communicates more successfully.

Advice to centres

- Advise students to respond to all the bullet points in order to access the full range of the assessment criteria.

- Remind students that if they go beyond the given word limits and address any of the bullet points outside the word limit, they will not be rewarded for this material.
- Work with students on a range of writing tasks: letters and emails (informal) and reports and articles (semi-formal) to develop understanding of appropriate style and register.
- Develop student summarising skills using appropriate texts.
- Remind students that they need to try and use their own words for the summarising task in order to access the full range of marks.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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